

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 14, 2008

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Ms. Daniese McMullin-Powell
Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: S.B. 200 [CHIP Premium]

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed S.B. 200 which promotes enrollment in the Delaware Healthy Children Program (DHCP), Delaware's version of the federal CHIP initiative. The bill characterizes the current \$10.00 to \$25.00 monthly premium as a barrier to program participation. The bill would eliminate the monthly premium altogether while authorizing DHSS, in its discretion, to charge minimal co-pays.

SCPD strongly endorses the proposed legislation. Consistent with the attachment, families with income between 100 and 200 percent of the poverty level (\$41,300 for family of four) qualify for the DHCP. The program covers children from birth to age 19. The benefits package is comprehensive and includes well-care visits, hospitalization, prescriptions, and dental care. Of the 8,840 children eligible for DHCP, only 45% (4,800) are actively enrolled. As a result, Delaware returns \$3 million of its \$10 million federal allotment annually. Enrollment is linked to improved health, better school performance, and reduced child mortality.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions regarding our position on the proposed legislation.

cc: The Honorable Ruth Ann Minner
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council